



# Air Force Base Conversion Agency

## NEWS RELEASE

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### AIR FORCE TO AMEND KELLY OFF-BASE CLEANUP PROPOSAL

**San Antonio, Texas** – The Air Force Base Conversion Agency will amend the “Draft Final Zone 4 Corrective Measures Study,” which was sent to the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission on April 4, this year.

This study outlines the Air Force concept for cleaning up the shallow groundwater contamination that has moved from East Kelly to the south and east of the former base.

The amendments will be a supplement showing modeling data that more accurately predicts the ground water cleanup timeline, and a correction of two tables in the study.

New modeling, based on the most recent sampling data, indicates that installing the proposed off-base cleanup systems will reduce the size of the groundwater plume by 70 percent in five years and by more than 99 percent in ten years.

“This new information is based on what we actually know is happening with the off-base plume,” said William Ryan, the Base Realignment and Closure environmental coordinator for the AFBCA at Kelly. “The modeling in the corrective measures study was done on information we had in 1999 and 2000. The new modeling was done with the plume information we got in last year’s groundwater sampling.”

According to Ryan, the latest information allows for a more accurate prediction of cleanup times because it incorporates information on rates of reduction in the plume since the installation of two interim systems put in place to prevent contamination from moving off-base.

The first is a system of vertical and horizontal extraction wells inside the perimeter of East Kelly. The second of these systems combines a containment wall with several vertical extraction wells at the southern edge of main Kelly.

The supplement should be ready for submission to the TNRCC within a month.

The Air Force will also make an immediate correction to two tables in the corrective measures study.

Information on the size of the tetrachloroethylene (PCE) plume was incorrectly used to define the size of the trichloroethylene (TCE) plume. As a result, the cleanup times for the Air Force’s preferred plan were incorrectly summarized as reducing the TCE plume by 65 percent in five years, 94 percent in ten years, and by 99 percent in 15 years. The reductions predicted from this modeling, based on the 1999-2000 data, were actually 39 percent in five years, 78 percent in ten years, and 99 percent in 15 years.

“The error was in the creation of these two tables,” explained Ryan. “All the rest of the figures and data in the report are correct.”

The Air Force’s preferred option calls for installation of two permeable reactive barriers to the east of Zone 4, or East Kelly, and vertical groundwater extraction wells south of East Kelly.

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The permeable reactive barriers will be underground trenches filled with iron filings placed to intercept the groundwater flows. As water passes through the trenches, the iron filings convert the contaminants to carbon dioxide, water and minerals. This process takes advantage of the natural flow of the groundwater and treats it completely underground.

“Although we’re amending the study, the preferred option doesn’t change,” said Ryan. “We feel this option is still the best one because it can be installed relatively quickly, with less disruption to the neighborhoods.”

The Air Force will hold a 45-day public comment period this summer on the Zone 4 plan and on the Zone 5 cleanup plan, which outlines cleanup for off-base contamination north of Kelly along Growden Road.

This comment period will include three public meetings. The first meeting will be Saturday, June 15 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Dwight Middle School, 2454 West Southcross. The other two meetings will be held at Kennedy High School, 1922 South Gen. McMullen, from 6 to 9 p.m. on June 18 and July 25.

The Zone 4 and Zone 5 corrective measures studies are available at the San Antonio Central Library in the government documents section. In addition, community members who want more information on these proposals can call the Kelly public information line at 925-0956.

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